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United States Department of State



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Washington, D.C. 20520

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Dear Senator Grassley:

The Secretary has asked me to reply to your letter dated June 10 requesting information on United States policy with regard to Rwanda. We share your constituents' concern over the tragic occurrences there, and take this opportunity to inform you of the efforts the U.S. has made thus far to address the situation.

The United States supported the May 17 decision of the UN Security Council to expand UNAMIR, the UN peacekeeping force, from its current level of 450 troops to up to 5,500 troops. The enlarged force will have the expanded mandate of protecting relief efforts and helping ensure the safety of threatened civilian populations. We are working closely with the UN to finalize planning on the mission in order to expedite deployment. We supported emergency French-led humanitarian intervention under UN auspices, which began June 24, to protect threatened populations until expanded UNAMIR can deploy. The May 17 UN resolution also places an arms embargo on Rwanda, a measure that the U.S. strongly advocated and fully supports.

The United States has already provided over \$94 million in humanitarian aid to the hundreds of thousands of refugees and over one million internally displaced persons. The United States has sponsored almost one hundred airlifts to the region, carrying food, blankets, materials for shelter, and other emergency supplies. On May 25 the U.S. Agency for International Development's (USAID) Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance in the bureau for Humanitarian Response deployed a Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) to the region. The DART conducts assessments in the affected areas and provides an immediate funding mechanism for projects in Rwanda sponsored by non-governmental organizations, UN agencies and international organizations.

Since the crisis began, we have exerted continuous diplomatic pressure on the warring parties to stop the killings, agree to an immediate cease-fire, and resume negotiations within the framework of the Arusha peace accord signed in August 1993. The United States was a key supporter of the year-long Arusha negotiations and we are pushing the parties to revive this process.

The Honorable  
Charles E. Grassley,  
United States Senate.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE

REVIEW  
AUTHORITY: HARRY R. MELONE

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The United States strongly supported convening a special session of the UN Human Rights Commission to consider the Rwandan tragedy. As a result of the session, held May 24-25, a special rapporteur was sent to investigate human rights atrocities in Rwanda--a key U.S. goal. His report, issued June 28, provided details of the massacres in Rwanda, which he classified as genocide, and called for an international tribunal to judge the perpetrators of the massacres. On July 1, the UN Security Council approved resolution 935 which established a Commission of Experts to examine violations of international humanitarian law in Rwanda.

Throughout the crisis, the United States has worked to energize and mobilize the international community. The President sent the Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, John Shattuck, to the region early on to consult with regional leaders on a coordinated international response. In addition, we have held high-level consultations with regional and European officials to assure a coordinated international response. At the Organization of African Unity annual summit held in Tunis June 13-15, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs George Moose held bilateral meetings with the Presidents of Burundi, Uganda and Tanzania on the situation in Rwanda. In mid-June, U.S. Ambassador to Rwanda David Rawson led a team of officials from USAID and the Departments of State and Defense who traveled to the region to bolster support for Burundi, to discuss relief needs and preparedness, to enlist support for a cease-fire in Rwanda, and to discuss UNAMIR expansion.

We will continue to devote our energies to restoring peace in Rwanda, so that the difficult task of rebuilding the country and relaunching the process of national reconciliation can begin.

I hope that the above information is helpful to you in responding to your constituents. Please do not hesitate to contact us if my office can be of further assistance to you on this or any other matter.

Sincerely yours,

Wendy R. Sherman  
Assistant Secretary  
Legislative Affairs

Enclosure:  
Correspondence returned.

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